Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 44-45 with the following amended paragraph:

The methods of the invention provide unparalleled performance in diagnosing the presence or severity of liver fibrosis. While not all patients are provided with a diagnosis, the majority are diagnosed with extremely good accuracy. As an example, in a patient population with about 40% fibrosis prevalence, almost 70% of the population are diagnosed with more than 91% accuracy and with a positive predictive value of more than 96% and a negative predictive value of more than 89%. This excellent performance contrasts with alternative methods such as the method of ~~Poynard~~ Imbert-Bismut et al., Lancet 357:1069 (2001). Using the method of ~~Poynard~~ Imbert-Bismut et al. based on analysis of the six markers $\alpha 2$-MG, $\alpha 2$-globulin, total bilirubin, γ-globulin, apoA1 and GGT, only about 50% of a population having about 40% fibrosis prevalence are diagnosed, and only with an accuracy of about 89% (see Table 8). Thus, the methods of the invention provide an improvement, in that a significantly greater percentage of a patient population (about 70% as compared to about 50%) are diagnosed, and with an accuracy of more than 91% as compared to an accuracy of around 89% (see Table 8). Due to the novel performance characteristics of a method of the invention, biopsy is typically unnecessary in at least 65% of a patient population, and the patients diagnosed can have confidence in a diagnosis that is more than 90% accurate.